

blue-winged warbler *Vermivora cyanoptera*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Parulidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The blue-winged warbler averages four and one-half to five inches in length. The male and female are similar in appearance. The head and belly feathers are yellow while the wing feathers are blue, and the back and tail feathers are green. Two white bars are present on each wing. A thin black mark can be seen extending through each eye.

BEHAVIORS

The blue-winged warbler is an uncommon migrant and summer resident statewide. It winters from Mexico to Panama. Spring migrants begin arriving in Illinois in April. Nesting occurs in May and June. The nest is placed on or near the ground, supported by dead leaves and attached to vegetation. The nest is built of grasses, dead leaves and bark and lined with shredded bark, grasses and horsehair. The female builds the nest into which she lays four to six white eggs with brown speckles. The female alone incubates the eggs for the 10- to 11-day incubation period. Fall migration begins in August. The blue-winged warbler lives in upland forests, bottomland forests, forest edges, brushy hillsides and swamps. Its song is an ascending buzz, followed by a descending buzz (“beeee-bzzzz”). It feeds from middle to lower areas of vegetation, eating insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie Habitats

none

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